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SOURCE Ho-n'ing Jih-pao.COMMUNIST IRREGULARS ACTIVE IN CHEKIANG

Chou Yen, Governor of Chekiang, told reporters that local Communists numbered about 20,000, but unofficial quarters estimate those in southern Chekiang alone at more than 20,000: western Chekiang, 15,000; and eastern Chekiang, about 10,000. The Communists have been well-established in the south along the Fukien border, for a long time. Efforts at suppression have merely multiplied their number. Now they operate under the banner of "Liberation Army North of the Ou Ho." In western Chekiang, the region around T'ien-shan Shan has become a Communist empire. In eastern Chekiang, the "People's Liberation Army West of the Railway" is combining with Communist bands in west Chekiang and Anhwei to set up organizations to cooperate with the main CCF forces when they cross the Ch'ang Chiang (Yangtze).

Quite a number of hsien cities in the south of the province have been taken by Communists. A body of Chinese Communist irregulars is moving toward the Chekiang-Kiangsi Railway to block the only retreat left for the government troops in the Nan-ching--Chang-hai--Hang-chow triangle. Small bands are forming into larger groups to attack the cities, and, in a number of cases, the Communist have simply persuaded government garrisons to hand over their arms.

These Communist irregular units are getting together in preparation for the CCF advance south, and dealing with them is no longer a matter of local preservation of the peace. Often the troops sent to quell a disturbance surrender to the trouble-makers.

Urgent orders have been issued to conscript new recruits at the rate of five men per 100 families, or 140,000 for the province by 20 March 1949. However, government officials, thinking that peace will come soon, are refusing to take on this responsibility and are "retiring."

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- 1 -

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